

Needing God's Leading, Part 2 - Romans 2:6-13 – May 1st, 2011

- This is part two of a series that I've titled; "Needing God's Leading." Two weeks ago, we began this study of this second chapter of Romans.
- What we're seeing is how that the beloved Apostle is ever so brilliantly, yet bluntly, leading those reading this Epistle to a critical conclusion.
- Namely, the need for mankind to both recognize and conclude that the state of his sinful condition, deserves the wrath of a just and holy God.

- In chapter one, Paul speaks to the evil practices of the immoral and now in chapter two speaks to those who fancy themselves as being moral.
- It's for this reason, there is this need, for a righteous God to lead both the immoral and the moral to a plea of guilty in the courtroom of eternity.
- Now, the question becomes, how is Paul going to accomplish this? The answer? Romans chapters 1-3, with the first one found in chapter 2:1.

1. To Self-Judgment (Verse 1)

- v1 Paul says they're without excuse even seeing themselves as moral. They pass judgment on those doing what they themselves are guilty of.

2. To Truth (Verses 2-3)

- v2-3 He asks them how, knowing God's judgments are based on truth, they will escape judgment when they do the very things they're judging.

3. To Repentance (Verses 4-5)

- v4-5 Their stubborn and unrepentant heart stores up God's wrath, and they show contempt for God's kindness, which leads one to repentance.

4. To Eternal-Life (Verses 6-8)

(6) God "will give to each person according to what he has done." (7) To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. (8) But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.

- v6-7 Paul says how God gives each person according to what he's done. Persistently doing good, and seeking God's glory leads to eternal life.
- v8 He says conversely, those who are self-seeking, and reject the truth, and following evil, will only be the recipients of God's wrath and anger.
- It's important to note that the wrath of God here mentioned carries with it the idea of a heated anger. Thumos in the Greek, thermos in English.

- God will give all of us either the gift of eternal life, or the wrath of His eternal anger, and the litmus test will be graded on the good we've done.
- Herein lies the problem, and so too does this lead up to that which God is leading them to specifically, no one, save One has ever done good.
- In other words, the only way one who sees themselves as morally good is really good, is if they always do good, glorifying and honoring God.

William Newell - "Who will judge every one according to [what he has done?]." How could it be otherwise? You know that when a case comes to trial in courts of law, men first endeavor, through questioning witnesses, to discover the facts. Now God knows all the facts about every one of Adam's race, and His judgment must be in accordance with them. It is not that God desires you to be damned, but, contrariwise, to believe on His Son, upon Whom His judgment for human sin fell at Calvary."

- God's purpose is to lead man, to His need for, eternal life, but He must first lead, that man to his need, for mercy, or he receives eternal wrath.
- If I don't see my need for it, I'll never allow you to lead me to it. Conversely, if I see I'm guilty I'll throw myself before judge, begging for mercy.
- However, if I see myself as not guilty, according to what I have done, then I will be deceived and believe that I deserve justice, and not mercy.

One Bible Teacher so aptly illustrated this principle of man's need for mercy by the telling of this story; "This picture doesn't do me justice," said the politician to the photographer. The photographer to the politician replies; "With a face like yours sir, you should not be asking for justice, rather, you need mercy!"

5. To Peace (Verses 9-10)

(9) There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; (10) but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

- v9 Paul then goes on to tell them how there will be trouble and distress for everyone who does evil, first for the Jew, then also for the Gentile.
- v10 He contrasts their trouble and distress with glory, honor, and peace for everyone who does good instead, first for the Jew, then the Gentile.
- The Apostle Paul is doing the same thing here in verses nine and ten, as he did in verses six through eight, by offering good, only to the good.

- Furthermore in so doing, he makes it ever so clear that God's bar of goodness is raised ever so higher than their moral piety could ever reach.
- Then, Paul takes it a step further by contrasting the good with the evil, for Jew or Gentile, in that it's peace for the good, distress for the evil.
- Perhaps you see where this is going. If man is not good, and the evidence proves he's not, then he will never drink from this cup of peace.

- Now, we still have a problem. If no one, save One, is good, then for Paul to contrast good with evil becomes an exercise in futility at best.
- Well, not so fast, here's why; rather than Paul saying that it's sin versus sinlessness, he says it's an impenitent heart verses a repentant heart.
- Just as glory, honor, and peace will come vis-a-vis a repentant heart, so too does trouble and distress come vis-a-vis the impenitent heart.

- I've heard it said that one can never know the peace of God, until they have peace with God. The antithesis of peace is turmoil and distress.
- This may be deemed a firm grasp of the obvious, because Paul needs to make it obvious. They are needing God's leading to that peace.
- Maybe this would explain why it is that our life is filled with turmoil and distress instead of peace. Maybe it's because of my impenitent heart.

6. To Obedience (Verses 11-13)

(11) For God does not show favoritism. (12) All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. (13) For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous.

- v11-12 God shows no favoritism. All who sin apart from the law, perish apart from the law. Those sinning under the law, are judged by the law.
- v13 The reason is, those hearing the law are not righteous in God's sight, rather, it's those who obey the law that God will declare as righteous.
- In other words, what Paul is saying here is that it's only those who do what's right in the sight of God, that will be declared as right before God.

- Only those who are obedient to God, will be declared as righteous before God. Conversely those who are disobedient to God, will not be.
- I've got to hand it to Paul here because he stays on message and never veers off. You might say, he's keeping the main thing, the main thing.
- What's the main thing? Man needing God's leading to entering a guilty plea before the Judge of the universe in this, the courtroom of eternity.

- Notice Paul writes that God doesn't show favoritism. Why does he preface the contrast of those right, in God's site, and those not, in this way?
- I believe that the answer is found in the context in which he writes it. He refers to Gentiles as apart from the law, and Jews as under the law.
- In the context of this passage, Paul paints the colors of graphic and stark contrast, on the canvass of their perceived goodness and morality.

- It's eternal life contrasted with eternal wrath, good with evil, distress with peace, under the law with apart from the law, and Jew with Gentile.
- Unless that priceless diamond of God's perfect righteousness, is placed on the black cloth of our sin and unrighteousness, we will not see it.
- Unless Paul, as the prosecuting attorney, contrasts the black of mans sin with the white of Christ's sinlessness, then the verdict is; "not guilty."

- By the way; have you noticed along the way, that there is a very profound progression in how needing God's leading will lead one to the other.
- Judging one's self leads me to God's truth about my sinful condition. This in turn leads me via the kindness of God, to a genuine repentance.
- Repentance before God, leads me to eternal life from God. Then knowing I have peace with God and the peace of God, I'm led to obey God.